

The Phoenix of Life

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Summary: Admiral Adams commands his ship, the Phoenix of Life, and his very own Fleet. He is determined to stay and fight at Reach, but is forced out by Fleet Admiral Lord Terrence Hood. Hood does not know that he would put the Admiral and his crew in greater peril than they were in at Reach...

1. Out of the Frying Pan

The Phoenix of Life

**Prologue: Out of the Frying Pan**

"Admiral, the Covenant have destroyed several _Stalwart_-class Light Frigates and two Corvettes. They have three CAS-class Assault Carriers, about 200 Type-31 Seraphs, and an uncountable number of Phantoms!" reported Sergeant Major David Ferrel, rushing to Admiral Adams to show him the number of estimated UNSC ship losses.

"I see, but I tell you as God as my witness, Reach will not fall until the Phoenix of Life is destroyed and lay cold and dead!" the Admiral said, very determined to keep the UNSC Military world out of the Hands of the Covenant.

"Have you seen what is happening to Reach?" asked David, with a slight feeling of disbelief of his superior. "If you swear something like that, then you will surely end up as dead as dead can be!"

"Yes, Sergeant, I have seen the rest of Reach and I can safely say that the battle isn't largely in our favor," the Admiral said as he watched another Light Frigate be destroyed. "But we haven't lost yet."

"Really? You believe you can help save Reach?"

"No, I believe not just I, but everyone captain of the UNSC can help save Reach, or what's left of it, away."

"I am sorry sir, but I would have to disagree. There's nothing left to save in Reach. Most of the UNSC has already left. Why haven't you retreated?"

"I_"started the Admiral.

****BOOM!****

The ship shook. They had been hit by a covenant Assault Carrier. The system said that shields were at 82 percent and holding. The Captain had fallen out of his captain's chair and was now being helped up by David and Jack Rogers, a Cadet on the ship. Jack was part of the Navy, while David was part of the Army.

"Covenant Ships firing at full speed, Admiral!" said Navigator John Hicons.

"Will the shields hold?" asked Admiral Adams.

"I don't know, sir. The Covenant are firing at us, but the shields are holding well enough. Only minor damage on Deck 3." said Ensign Cassandra Forleth.

"Good, they'll hold for the time being_"

****BOOM!****

This time, the ship didn't just shake once, it shook multiple times. The Emergency Alarms were on, and the system said that shields were at 31 percent, but luckily holding.

"Major damage on Decks 3,5, and 7! At least 20 crew members killed, and over 100 wounded, sir!" said Cassandra. "We are being contacted by Fleet Admiral Lord Terrence Hood!"

"I know who he is, Ensign." snapped the Admiral. "Put him through." The Ensign tapped some buttons, and the face of Admiral Hood appeared on the ship's interface.

"Admiral Adams, would you mind telling me why you, your Ship, and your Fleet haven't left the vicinity of Reach yet?" asked Hood.

"Sir, I request that you allow my Fleet and I to stay and fight at Reach!" replied the Admiral.

"Permission Denied, Admiral!"

"But, sir_"

"No buts, Admiral! Get you and your Fleet out of there! Reach is a lost battle! If you do not pull out, you will be demoted."

The Admiral stared at Hood for what seemed like ages. The Lord's expression did not budge. The Admiral reluctantly decided to obey the Fleet Admiral's wishes.

"Yes, sir." said the Captain, saluting the Admiral. The Fleet Admiral's face disappeared. "Well, you heard the man, alert the fleet, we're hyperspacin' outta' here!"

****TO BE CONTINUED...****

2. Into the Fire

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****Chapter 2: Into the Fire****

'_Did the Fleet Admiral know what he was saying?_' thought Admiral Adams. '_He just ordered me to leave the second most important Planet in Human territory, besides Earth_! _Now I don't know where to go! Admiral Cole said that we couldn't go to Earth! I guess we must follow the Fleet._'

"Ensign, get us to where the Pillar of Autumn went!" commanded the Amdiral.

"Sir, I don't know where they went." replied the Ensign.

"Maybe Earth, sir?" asked David

"Do you remember Cole Protocol?"

"Oh, right."

"Sir?" asked the Ensign

"Yes, Ensign?"

"Um, something has put us into hyperspace. I can't stop it!"

"What? Put the ship on Red Alert! We could come out anywhere, inciuding in the middle of a Covenant shipyard!"

"Yes, sir, Admiral!"

"Sergeant Major, get your men ready, and do it fast!"

"Sir, yes, sir!" obeyed the Sergeant Major. The Major ran down a couple halls and told a cadet to gather his men to meet him in the Cargo Hold. The Admiral grabbed a Fleet-wide communicator.

"Attention, all ships! This is Admiral Adams! We are being pulled into hyperspace! Contact the UNSC and tell them what has happened! I repeat_" once more, the Captain was cut off. They were in hyperspace.

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"Ensign, where in the galaxy are we?" asked the Admiral.

"Unknown System, sir." replied Cassandra.

"A Covenant System?"

"I can't tell. If it is, there are no ships in range."

"Don't the Covenant have cloaking devices?"

"I believe they would have attacked by now, sir. Though it is possible that they are waiting for something."

"Good, that gives us a little hope anyway. Any way we can get back to the Fleet?"

"Sir, that's where the hope is gone. Somethng is blocking the coordinates. I believe it could be Covenant, or maybe URF?"

"I don't think it's the Covenant, though this could be a URF unknown system."

"Shall we discover what's in this system?"

"Do a scan." The Ensign looked at her interface and soon looked back up with a strange expression on her face.

"Sir, scans say that another UNSC ship is in the area, even though we can't see it. I believe that the crew may be in Cryo."

"A UNSC ship? I don't think any ship would be in an uncharted system, unless they are an expedition fleet."

"Coming into range now, sir." Out of the window, the Admiral could see the shape of a ship. It looked old to be any of the new, modern UNSC ships. "Could it be a MIA?"

"It could be, though I don't know." The Phoenix was close enough now to see the faint outlining of faded letters on the side of the ship.

"Sir, I think that says the Spirit of_"

"THE SPIRIT OF FIRE! I thought that ship was Lost with All Hands. Hail the ship immediately!" Cassandra hailed the ship.

"Yes?" said an A.I., female.

"Is this the Captain of the Spirit of Fire?"

"No, I am waking the crew now." The Admiral waited for the crew to wake from Cryo.

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"Captain, wake up. We have been found by another UNSC ship." The captain had already awoken from his sleep and was waking the rest of the crew.

"Who?"

"A certain Phoenix of Life, commanded by an Admiral Adams."

"I'll be right there."

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"Admiral Adams? This is Captain James Cutter, Captain of the Spirit of Fire."

"Captain, your ship was stated Lost with All hands. Could you come aboard?"

"In time. Just one question."

"Ask away."

"What year is it?"

3. What Was It?

The Phoenix of Life

Chapter 3: What was it?

"So the year is really 2552?" asked Professor Anders, the Spirit of Fire's civilian scientist.

"Yes, I'm afraid it is, Ms. Anders." answered Adams.

"And Reach has really fallen?" asked Cutter.

"I'm also equally afraid that's true, too."

"Well this situation is all nice and dandy!" joked Serina, the Spirit of Fire's A.I.

"Serina, you freak me out way too much." said Anders.

"Happy to be of service!"

"Shut up, Serina."

"As you wish, Professor Anders."

"Ladys, please. So the Life Forms you discovered on the Shield World infected both humans and Covenant and turned them into things?" asked Adams.

"Yes, Admiral. I am sorry to say Sergeant John Forge died so we could escape the world." answered Cutter.

"So, pretty much one of those things can infect a plant or animal and make more of those things, and then pile up a bunch of infected mass and make one of the Hive Mind things?" Cassandra said.

"Yes, Ensign Cassandra. Only you humans could put it in such simple words." Serina put in. Cassandra looked hurt that the artificial intelligence had basically just called her and all other humans stupid.

"So, what you call these things?"

"I have identified them as Flood, because they can take an area with

many life forms over in a matter of seconds, just as a Flood can destroy everything in it's path in a matter of seconds." said Serina as smartly as she could, like she was trying to insult Cassandra some more.

"Don't worry, Cassandra, you'll get used to her, even if you still think she's an annoying little computer." comforted Anders. Serina looked at Professor Anders with a cold look in her artificial eyes. Then, the Spartans of Red Team, Douglas, Jerome, and Alice, walked over to them.

"Do you think you can get us out of here? Or are we stuck for another twenty years?" asked Douglas, in a smart-elek way.

"Douglas, to answer your question, I do not know. Something is jamming our coordinates so we can't tell if we will hyperspace to the right place. I only hope we'll find out what is jamming the signal, and soon. I'm already tired of this place. I believe there could be a URF base or maybe a Covenant Outpost around here sending out a jamming signal." stated Cassandra.

"Oh, great! So we have to go to another planet full of Flood and get trapped and then have Cutter send a couple squads of ODSTs out to save Spartans. Whoever heard of ODSTs saving Spartans, no matter if they're just Spartan-IIs!"

"I did not say that. All I said was that we would have to find out where the bases are, and MAC Blast them. I do love a good MAC Blast."

"Cutter used to send them down while we were in battle, though he'd usually have so bad aim that he'd injured almost everyone of us on the battlefield, forcing us to retreat."

"I was only trying to see how prepared my army was, and how much they could sustain!" defended Cutter.

"Ha ha ha! Not that funny, Cutter!" retorted Douglas.

"And the say we ladies fight." said Serina, with Cassandra and Anders nodding in agreement.

"Anyway, you said you had to cleanse the Flood off of the ship before the Forerunner structure would allow you pass?" asked Adams

"Yes, the Forerunners sent out forces to attack the Flood and us, if they saw us." replied Alice.

"Strange, any contact we've had with the Forerunners has been peaceful."

"Did you guys have any Flood on the deck of your ship?"

"Well, no."

Just then, the Sergeant Major walked into the Bridge. "So, are me and my marines going to battle or not?" he asked.

"Not just yet. But I promise, you will either see some action with Flood, Covenant, or the URF." answered Cutter.

"Ok, the last two, I get and understand, sir. But what in the name of the UEG is the Flood?"

"Do I really have to explain it all again?" asked Anders.

"No, I can." stated Serina.

4. So That's What It Was

The Phoenix of Life

Chapter 4: _And Back Into the Frying Pan_!

"Sir, I've got it!" Cassandra suddenly yelled during the period of silent thinking, startling almost everyone but the Red Team Spartans and the Silent A.I.

"What have you got, Ensign?" asked Admiral Adams.

"Yeah, what's so important that you have to go scaring everyone out of there wits?" inquired the Sergeant Major in a country accent.

"I've found out where the jamming signal is coming from!"

"Where, then?" Anders asked, while Captain Cutter stood up, intently listening to the Ensign

Adams should give her a promotion, the Captain thought to himself. _Hard to believe such a smart woman is only a Ensign._ Cutter then realized he was thinking like a grandpa.

"Um, I don't know the name of the planet, but it looks like a Major Rebel world. I also detect a small presence of Covenant and a medium presence of unknown anomalies on the other side of the planet."

"What is the only organism that we know of that is unknown? Hmm, this should be a hard one!" mocked Serina.

"Be serious, Serina!" snapped Captain Cutter

"Yes, sir." she replied.

"Anyway, the jamming signal is coming from the huge Rebel base. Red Team, it looks like you're going to get to fight some of the Rebels, Covenant, and Flood."

"Thank God! I need some action!" said Jerome. He hadn't spoken once, so he startled and suprised the crew of the Phoenix. "What?" he asked, when he saw their stares.

"Nothing." they all said.

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"Ok, the Spirit of Fire has more Marines than the Phoenix, so we'll be the ground force. Though some Phoenix Marines would be helpful.

I'm sure that the Covenant have new weapons up their sleeves that we haven't seen, if we even encounter them. I bet the Rebels do, too." stated Captain Cutter.

"We'll send down the Sergeant Major and his Marines with you." said Adams.

"Captain, I need to go, too." Anders put in.

"Anders, we saw what happened last time. Remember being pinned down at the artifact?" Serina said.

"Shut up, Serina." Anders commanded.

"As you wish." replied Serina.

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"Red Team, get ready to be dropped. You're going to be dropped first, so we can clear the area. Once the area is cleared, we'll send down the marines and establish a outpost as an evac for the injured marines. This outpost will also only be the only way you're going to get back on this ship, so don't lose it." said Cutter.

"Red Team ready. Orders understood!" replied Douglas.

"Drop in Five...Four...Three...Two...One...DROP!"

The Red Team pod dropped down. For a moment, all contact with Red Team was lost. The crew held their breath.

"Red Team, reporting in!" said Douglas. A series of cheers went up from the crew. "But we've got a load of Covies and Rebels fighting here!"

"Engage both sides, Spartans." commanded Cutter.

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"Alice, on your Left!" screamed Jerome as a rocket sailed past Alice. Alice pointed her chain gun in the direction the rocket came from, and killed several Rebels. Douglas was engaging the Covenant side of the battle, while Alice was engaging the others. Jerome was trying to scout for a base position.

Suddenly, the Rebels stopped firing on the Spartans. What looked to be a Rebel commanding officer rode a mongoose towards Alice.

"Spartans, hold your fire on us! Right now, our only concern are these Covenant soldiers!" the Commander said. An Elite with a Energy Sword raced to him, but was shot down by Jerome. The commander looked at Jerome and Jerome thought he heard the words "Thank you." from a Rebel.

Soon, the battle turned on the Covenant. With the combined forces of Rebels and Spartans, the Covenant forces were soon attempting to fall back. The Spartans didn't stop firing when the Rebels did, they were determined to destroy the Covenant, but the Covenant were soon gone.

"Spartans, over here!" yelled the Rebel Officer, pointing to the Rebel Base. Alice, Douglas, and Jerome ran over to meet the Officer.

"What are you Rebels doing here?" asked Jerome

"We're fine, thanks for asking. We're here because we thought we might get away from the Covenant and the UNSC. Now we're being killed by two things: Those organisms and the Covenant."

"Why are you jamming the coordinate signals for our ships?"

"It's the only thing keeping the Covenant and those things on this planet and out of the galaxy." replied the Officer.

"You mean the Flood have ships?"

"If by Flood you mean those things, then yes. They take over ship by compiling infected mass and taking them and infecting enough people to make those big minds so they can become smart enough to fly the ships. If we lifted those jamming signals, they would have already destroyed the galaxy. We've barely got a real base anymore and the Covenant are trying to contain the thing by killing us and killing their comrades that get infected."

"How exactly did they get the ships?"

"They took over most of the Covenant ships here and they took all of our ships a long time ago."

"Who's commanding the Covenant?"

"We've reason to think that they have a Prophet with them. We believe it's the Prophet of Remorse." the Officer said. Right after, hundreds of Flood infection forms poured out of the nearby infected woods. There were some combat forms that looked faintly like humans, Elites, Grunts, and a combination of the three.

"So that's what those things look like." said Adams, who was watching the battle from Douglas' battle camera.

5. Strawberry YooHoos

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Chapter 5: Strawberry YooHoos

"Uh, Admiral, we need those men NOW! The Rebels are our friends for now. If they let down that signal, the Flood is coming your way." said Douglas, with a stare from the Rebel Commander for his untrustfulness

"Copy that. Sending the Sergeant Major and his marines. Tell him to go easy on the Rebels. He very UNSC Hardcore." replied the Ensign. She look over to inform the Sergeant Major, just to find he was already heading down the hall to gather his men to the pelicans.

"I hope he doesn't mind working with Rebels..." Serina

joked.

"That's why we have superior officers. If he was the highest rank here, he would have MAC Blasted the entire Rebel Base. That's the difference in the Army and the Navy." said the Admiral.

"Speaking of Superior Officers, what ever happened to Admiral Cole?" asked Captain Cutter. He was shocked to see that he was recieved by sad faces. "What?" he asked. "What happened to the Admiral?"

"Admiral Preston Cole was killed at the Fall of Reach after instating the Cole Protocol. It states that no retreating UNSC ship can retreat to Earth. That's why we were debating where to go when we were suddenly pulled into Hyperspace. That's how we ended up here." Adams answered.

Captain Cutter just sat there, a look of growing sadness on his face. One of the most sturdy Captains in UNSC history, and he looked as if he were about to break down crying.

"I was...I was offered a position to serve by Admiral Cole. I could have gotten the whole crew promoted...I could've stopped this..I could've saved him...I could've...I..." Cutter said.

"There's nothing you could've done except die with him. His ship was hit by a Capital Cruiser. The ship didn't know hit it. The ship almost explod on impact. He was just able to set off a few escape pods before the ship went down."

"SIR? IS ANYONE THERE? WHERE ARE THOSE MARINES?" screamed Douglas. Everyone snapped out of their trance and got to work.

"Sending them down now!" the Ensign said.

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The Sergeant Major had just seen a man be infected. Sure the man was a rebel, but even the likes of the Sergeant couldn't bear to see a man squirm while a thing inserted itself on his head and slowly took him over. Soon the man was unrecogizable. Then it started running towards the Sergeant.

"DIE! DIE! DIE YOU UGLY MOTHERF*****!" the Sergeant screamed as he shot the Combat form into pieces.

"CALM DOWN, SERGEANT!" yelled Douglas.

"Sorry, I just never imagined..."

"None of us can, until it happens."

"That's the last of the Flood! Get inside the base!" the Rebel Commander said.

...

"So what's your name?" the Sergeant Major asked the Rebel Commander.

"I'm URF General Satin Gesen. Who are you?"

"I'm United Nations Space Command Sergeant Major David Ferrel. We are to help you get rid of the Covies and the Flood, so we can leave."

"Well, Sergeant, count on staying here for a long time, unless you would like to try to destroy that Mind thing of the Flood's. If you kill the Covenant, that's one less thing we have to worry about."

"I'll do my best. Now, I'm going to get me a Strawberry YooHoo. After that, we march towards the Flood Mind. These Spartans over here know how to deal with them." And with that, the Sergeant Major walked out.

"Last time we fought one of these, there were Colonies of Flood somewhere around the Mind. When we disabled these colonies, the Mind got weaker. But there was a catch. We didn't kill the Colonies, we just disabled them. After a period of time, they came back and returned strength to the Hive Mind. We kept units around the Colonies so we could kill the Mind easily." Douglas recalled.

"But it was still a challenge to destroy the Mind. It was tough no matter what. And on top of that, there was a horde of Flood around it." said Alice

"Uh, did it look like it was a huge Hive with sacks of slime?" asked Satin

"That's exactly what it was." answered Jerome.

"Um, there's like six hives, twenty colonies, and the biggest horde of Flood I've ever seen!" replied Satin.

"Oh."

"Yeah."

"I guess we'll just have to make it work, then. Besides, we've got Marines from two ships, about fifty warthogs and seven scorpion tanks. And, if you provided some support, the Flood might go down even quicker." Jerome said, trying to coax Satin into giving them some soldiers.

"Absolutley not! Most of the men here are not even trained. The highest training we have are either Used-to-be-Hunters, or Former UNSC Soldiers, like me."

"You were in the UNSC?"

"I was before they took over the United Earth Government."

"The UEG was weak. They couldn't deal with the Covenant Threat." said the Sergeant Major, who had come back in, with a Strawberry YooHoo. "Man, I love these things!"

"Sergeant Major, get serious."

"Satin, I'm as serious as I can be. I absolutely love my Strawberry

YooHoos." said the Major. He opened the YooHoo and started drinking it. He saw the General staring at him and said "What, want some?"

"I'm good."

"Suit yourself."

"Ok, stop drinking your YooHoo and let's go kick some Flood A**!" said Douglas.

"Alright, let's go get some." the Sergeant said, after crushing the empty YooHoo can in his hand. The Sergeant Major walked out, followed by the three Spartans.

"Good Luck, Sergeant Major." said Satin.

"Thanks, but I won't need it. I have Spartans." replied the Sergeant.

End
file.